

00:00:16:07

Erin Burnett:

Stay at home. That is the order tonight from four state governors as the corona virus spreads.

TEXT:

In the early days of Covid quarantine, my old high school classmates began meeting on Zoom.

At the time, no one could imagine where those conversations would lead us.

This is our story.

00:00:31:08

Bruce Dickinson:

Can you see me?

Harry Moses:

Yes.

Classmate:

Uh, yeah.

00:00:34:00

Bruce Dickinson:

How do I get everyone on here? Oh, god.

David:

Are you on a phone, or a laptop?

Bruce Dickinson:

Phone.

00:00:40:05

Bruce Royer:

Swipe your screen left or right. It'll open up to, uh, gallery view.

Bruce Dickinson:

Right to left?

John Manulis:

Either way.

00:00:46:19

Bruce Royer:

It's either right to left or left to right.

Bruce Dickinson:

Is that Kevin Cooper?

Kevin Cooper:

It is.

Bruce Dickinson:

Oh my gosh, Coop.

00:00:52:12

Trey Scott:

What's happening?

Gene Murrow:

Hey, hello!

Harry Moses:

From geometry!

John Manulis:

Hey Gene!

00:00:57:18

Gene Murrow:

Yes! You got everybody, right.

Trey Scott:

Jonathan Greenberg!

Everyone:

Hey, hello, etc

Harry Moses:

Hey, Jonathan.

00:01:01:14

John Saliba:

Wow. Valedictorian in the house!

Trey Scott:

All the cool kids are here.

00:01:06:03

Blakely:

Franklin, give us an update.

Franklin Ruetz:
Well, I still exist.

(music plays)

OS TEXT:
A Peter Jones Productions
John Bard Manulis
production

00:01:12:02

John Manulis Zoom call VO:
How is everybody?

Chip Hayes:
We're being good Covid boys. Staying inside.

OS TEXT:
A film by Peter Jones

OS TEXT:
Fortunate Sons

00:01:29:06

Martin Montague:
We came from the elite to the elite to the elite.

Laurence Jarvik:
It was the top tier of Southern California, which had its own unique culture.

00:01:40:21

Bruce Blakely:

My grandfather was a super prominent physician in LA.

John Manulis:

My grandfather was in FDR's cabinet.

And my father was a producer.

00:01:50:21

Peter Jones:

Gramps hosted the Academy Awards.

SOUND UP - CONRAD NAGEL:

It's my privilege to present to you Mr. Louis B. Mayer.

Scott Shepherd:

My great-grandfather was Louis B. Mayer.

(MGM lion roars)

00:01:58:20

Scott Shepherd:

My dad made some really, really good movies... Like Breakfast at Tiffany's.

Chris Hormel:

My great-grandfather built a company in the meatpacking industry.

00:02:06:02

Bruce Blakely:

That's my mom with Eisenhower looking at her.

Brad Leonard:

Ronald Reagan carpooled me to school.

Bill Taradash:

My father wrote the screenplay for *From Here to Eternity*. How do I know that? It says so right here. (shows Oscar)

00:02:19:01

Martin Montague:

My father was the top Black disc jockey in Los Angeles.

Peter Jones:

Dad was the CEO of Northrop.

Dan Sarnoff:

Grandpa founded NBC.

00:02:29:18

SOUND UP - NBC LIVING COLOR:

Brought to you in living color on NBC.

SOUND UP - KOUFAX

Sandy into his wind-up.

00:02:34:13

Chip Hayes:

I just remember Sandy Koufax coming out for barbecues, and Lloyd Bridges was like my godfather. It's a blessing and a curse to be born into a famous family. You still had to live under that shadow of how am I going to do what he did, or she did?

00:02:58:08

John Manulis:

I mean just the perception of our, or the *lack* of perception, I should say, that we had. We had no idea that we were standing on like, multi-zillion dollar property. Within the Westside of LA, there

were these micro climates of class. I personally was always really aware of the difference between people who lived in lower Bel Air and upper Bel Air.

00:03:19:21

Pat McCabe:

For a lot of these people, it was a very small town between the private schools and the clubs.

Bill Taradash:

Back then the thing was, you start a family and if you're rich enough, you hire a nanny, the nanny takes care of the kids. You see the kids when you want to. I was much closer with my nannies than I was with my parents, that's for sure.

00:03:41:03

Chris Hormel:

A lot of times it was my parent's employees who were there when I fell down, or, y'know, needed someone to hold me.

00:03:51:23

Peter Jones:

I was just looking at home movies yesterday and I was just so aware, now that I've been in the world, of the extraordinary privilege. There we were, decked out in white, celebrating May Day.

00:04:12:02

John Manulis:

I remember May Day in color, and I remember Kennedy's death day at school and at home in black and white.

00:04:26:06

NEWS VO:

President Kennedy has been assassinated. It's official now, the president is dead.

00:04:32:12

Peter Jones:

We were in Miss Alice's second grade class...the principal called us all out and said, kids, the president has been killed. You're all going home.

The bubble we'd been living in was beginning to burst. And we saw it all on television.

SOUND UPS:

The Beverly Hillbillies...G.I. Joe...Dr. King has...This rock and roll group...I love to be an Oscar...Nopey!...Lead the marchers to a rally...

00:05:02:04

Announcer:

Martin Luther King 20 minutes ago died.

RFK:

What we need in the United States is not violence and lawlessness, but is love and wisdom and compassion towards one another.

00:05:15:10

Bruce Blakely:

I remember walking down to the kitchen and my mother said that Robert Kennedy had been assassinated the night before, less than a mile from my house at the Ambassador Hotel.

00:05:30:08

SOUND UP:

♪ Happening today, 1968. Los Angeles weather. ♪ Another nice day, a little cooler today. Sunny skies high near 85. Moderate smog, that means quite a bit. Right now it's 62 degrees in Hollywood. ♪ *Eleanor, gee I think you're swell, and you really do me well...*♪

00:05:46:16

Peter Jones:

Some guys talk about what a dramatic year 68 was, but as 12 year olds, we're not really thinking 'look at our place in this dramatic year' and all, we're just going to this new school where we have to wear all this military stuff.

♪ *MILITARY DRUMMING* ♪

00:06:17:16

Peter Jones:

The founder, in 1900, asked the permission of Harvard University if it would be okay if he named his prep school in Los Angeles 'Harvard School.'

00:06:34:01

Peter McCook:

We actually commuted in to Harvard every day. We had a, we had a chauffeur.

Chris Smith

The first day we got to Harvard, I see a platoon full of eighth graders charging us. They leaped on us, and threw us to the ground and beat us up.

00:06:52:08

Jim Hicken:

Mom and dad really liked the idea of me wearing a military uniform.

Cameron Farrer:

I recall seniors throwing dummy hand grenades on the football field at lunch.

00:07:04:07

Joel Chithea:

First thing in the morning, they check your shoes and your belt buckle.

Joe Healy:

I remember, oh shit, there's inspection today and I didn't do my shoes and I didn't do my belt.

00:07:14:15

Peter Jones:

They cut your hair if they thought it was too long. I mean, it was wildly strict.

David Theis:

If you were late and you were coming in through the door, Mr. McCleary would come out with his cattle prodder go "zzz, zzz". And just say better be here on time, next time.

00:07:33:01

Kevin Cooper:

I had transferred from a public school, and then I was in this place called Harvard with all these clearly really smart kids, thinking, 'holy shit, how am I going to manage this?'

Didn't we have to go to church every morning at a certain time?

00:07:57:10

Christopher:

I remember sitting next to Brad Leonard at chapel once, and he wouldn't kneel when everybody knelt, y'know? He said, "Well, I'm Jewish. So I don't do that." And I'm like, "Oh. Well, I think I'm Jewish too, but I don't really know much about it."

00:08:19:01

Franklin Ruetz:

I was so ultra right-wing and gung-ho and "kill the commies" and "give me a rifle and I'm ready to go."

Jim Hicken:

To dad, if you weren't a Republican, you were a Communist.

00:08:32:02

Cameron Farrer:

We were doing drills, salutes, military chants.

SOUND:

Hup, soldier!

Chris Hormel:

It was pretty cool when we got good enough to actually march in formation. Y'know, they'd say turn and we'd turn, they'd say stop and we stopped and we did everything in coordination. I thought it was really cool!

00:08:49:20

Cameron Farrer:

We were 11 or 12 years old and barely five feet tall and walking around in formation with rifles. It's just hard to comprehend.

00:09:00:19

Paul Kanin:

We had a draft then. People were just being grabbed and sent to Vietnam to die. Cannon fodder.

00:09:14:03

Jonathan Greenberg:

I was so impacted by the Vietnam War on TV. In 1968, one of the things that happened that year was the My Lai massacre. That really disturbed me, and I was trying to make sense of the enormous chasm between my experience and the experience of these kinds of pictures. I felt this embarrassment or shame at being such a privileged person.

00:09:55:11

Hippie General:

Don't forget, LSD has been declared a drug and Nixon a dope.

00:10:02:07

Kevin Cooper:

Toward the end of my first year at Harvard, all of a sudden the drill thing was being kind of ridiculed. Some kids had flowers stuck in the barrels of their rifles, they were fucking around when they were supposed to be doing the drills.

00:10:22:11

Franklin Ruetz:

And it was time for 8th grade to start. The secretary, Mrs. Ryan, said, "Oh, there is no uniform anymore".

00:10:34:07

Trey Scott

There's a revolution going on, so why not free things up? We're in freaking LA, California! You know, we're on the west coast.

The Doors Live at The Bowl '68

(organ riff while Peter is saying his line)

00:10:44:06

Peter:

Arena Rock, the rock and roll was insane! The Doors at the Hollywood Bowl...

♪Hello, I love you, won't you tell me your name?♪

Peter Jones:

Led Zeppelin, 'Stairway to Heaven'.

Led Zeppelin - Stairway To Heaven (Live at Earls Court 1975) [Official Video].mp4

♪And as we wind on down the road♪

00:11:01:19

Trey Scott:

We were placed into the wave of the cultural zeitgeist. How awesome to see that showing up in our school?

Peter Jones:

(OS) Life was happening faster than we could grow out our hair.

Trey Scott:

Yep.

Peter Jones:

(OS) ...Some better at it than others.

00:11:17:05

SOUND UP:

We have a lift off!

Chip Hayes:

We just landed a fricking man on the moon...There was this 'if you can dream it, you can do it' type of feeling in the country at the time.

00:11:33:11

Franklin Ruetz

(OS) And suddenly, there was a new headmaster, new teachers.

John Ameer (20200725 Ameer Zoom):

We were developing this kind of first-rate college prep school while in much of the country, there was so much chaos going on.

00:11:49:04

Kate Moore:

When I started in 1970, they completely had thrown out the curriculum.

We wanted you to be able to look at ideas around you and see the argument inherent in a song, or the argument in a story, or in a political cartoon, and be able to make your own argument back. That was going to be your intellectual independence.

Jonathan Greenberg:

The traditional elements that defined the school for decades were becoming eroded.

00:12:22:17

David Theis

The school was now kind of loosening up so much that you had Mr. Colbert teaching us how to make water pipes. (laughs)

Scott Shepherd:

By the time we were in 12th grade, we had long hair, we're smoking dope in the parking lots—

Chip Hayes

(interjecting) With our teachers!

00:12:40:15

Scott Shepherd

With our teachers, exactly.

00:12:44:00

Chris Hormel:

The one class that really stands out is Discovery of the Unconscious. They showed us all those surrealist films, and we were reading Virginia Woolf and Gertrude Stein. We spent a week on the Picasso painting "Guernica". I would tell people about it when I went to college and they were like, "a high school class?!" Y'know, I mean, they had us reading Freud and Jung.

00:13:14:14

Brad Leonard:

We read "The Age of Reason" by Jean-Paul Sartre. André Malraux's "Man's Fate." "Crime and Punishment" by Dostoyevsky. I mean, it was unbelievable.

00:13:23:11

Christopher Hormel:

When I read "The Jungle", I think I was pretty horrified. I thought it was gross. I knew that that was our family business. It wasn't something that we talked much about. It was pretty eye-opening.

00:13:40:00

Chris Lewis:

In the 7th grade, they were teaching you to memorize. From the 8th grade on, they really gave you the opportunity to think for yourself.

Mike Burnap:

I learned English writing from Mr. Rinander. He was asking us to do stuff that was clearly outside of my abilities, and he made it okay to fail.

00:13:58:21

Wayne Woodman:

There was a lot of intellectually precocious kids. So the competition academically was intense.

David Theis:

I just remember it being always competitive, and always having to do better. It was like your identity was so tied up in performing.

00:14:13:20

Kevin Cooper:

I remember the honor role. And it was published on the right side of the dean of the lower school's office. And it had all of our names and it had our GPAs. And y'know, I was toward the bottom of the list and I was like, "This won't do." My self-esteem couldn't handle it. And so I thought, "Man, I've really got to up my game."

00:14:36:06

David Theis:

It was a really heavily steeped environment for maleness. I mean, God, talk about zero room for sexual identity.

Cameron Farrer:

I really, really did not like the all-male experience there.

00:14:51:13

Charlie Munger:

I was so glad I didn't go to school with any girls because to be ignored by every girl, that part of adolescent competitive life just wasn't there.

Jonathan Greenberg:

Being in an all boys school, frankly, was weird. And I was awkward with girls, but I was also awkward with everyone at Harvard.

00:15:14:09

Joe Healy:

I just remember an overall sense of homophobia at Harvard School. This tone of “I’ve gotta prove that I’m a man”.

Pat McCabe:

To be a man then is, you have to go to the best school, to get to the best college to get the best job, so we can perpetuate this elite class of upper middle class white people.

00:15:40:23

Bill Taradash:

I had totally forgotten that there was one Black kid in our class.

♪ *Montague the Magnificent. The man of soul, to entertain you* ♪

00:15:49:09

Martin Montague:

While I was at Harvard School, my father was the top Black disc jockey in Los Angeles.

I came into the school, and now I’m in with the ultra rich and I figured out that the ultra rich were assholes.

When we were in Harvard school, and I’d meet a girl from Westlake, she’d say, “Martin, I really like you, but my parents won’t let me date Black people.” It’s something that I will never forget, Peter.

00:16:18:21

(Group Zoom)

Scott Shepherd:

Looks like Martin is coming on.

Trey Scott:

There he is.

Scott Shepherd:

Martin Montague, how are you?

00:16:25:23

Martin Montague:

Who the hell am I looking at? I don't remember you guys.

Bruce Blakely:

Tell us what you've been up to for the past 40 years.

Martin Montague:

Me? Okay, cause guys, when I left the school, I went, see ya!

00:16:42:05

Mike Burnap:

People did try to befriend Martin, but he was kinda prickly. He wouldn't accept it.

Chris Smith:

When I first met him, he was friendly. I mean, that was his default approach then. It turned, I think, somewhat during Harvard.

00:16:57:22

Martin Montague:

I had to park my car off-campus at the gas station and walk to school so nobody would hurt my car. So I wouldn't have my window broken and a Coca Cola poured on my seat. I wouldn't have my beautiful paint job scratched.

Peter Jones:

That happened?

Martin Montague:

Multiple times.

00:17:16:07

(Group Zoom)

Martin Montague:

I told Peter, that '57 oldsmobile super 88 that I had that some of you motherfuckers were scratching my goddamn windows and doors. Ok?

Dan Sarnoff:

Was that like a light, light beige colored car?

Martin Montague:

I had to repaint it because it was pink in the first time, it was a beautiful pink.

Dan Sarnoff:

Oh if it was pink no wonder they scratched the windows.

(Danny and Martin laugh)

00:17:47:16

Jonathan Greenberg:

I was a target. I was someone who was sensitive and therefore could be victimized.

Bill Taradash:

There was a bullying aspect of being there.

00:18:01:24

Dan Sarnoff:

We have some, um, some, some recompense to do. I'm sure all of us, for some of the things that we did when, when we were in cla- in school.

(Group zoom)

Trey Scott:

Franklin Ruetz!

Scott & Peter:

Franklin!

Trey Scott:

Oh my god that's awesome!

John Manulis:

Professor!

Trey Scott:

Franklin, good to see you! Bravo! Bravo! Frank!

(All clap)

00:18:22:13

Franklin Ruetz:

As a new kid apparently, I was fair game. They were putting salt in my milk. Then it turned to threats of physical harm.

Bill Taradash:

Ruetz, we voted him as the class president as a joke.

00:18:36:23

Chris Smith:

I respected that guy so much because everybody didn't take him seriously. They thought he was a nerd. They gave him relentless shit. That guy turns around and runs for class president and gets voted in. We all know it's a joke, and he does, too, and he doesn't care. He stands up at the podium. He acts like the class president. He carries himself, and he blows off all of the hoots and hollers and the criticisms and everybody making fun of him.

00:19:02:14

(Group Zoom)

Dan Sarnoff:

Wait is this is this Franklin's first time on?

John Manulis:

Yes.

Scott Shepherd:

Yes.

Trey Scott:

Yeah.

Dan Sarnoff:

Oh, a virgin.

00:19:08:17

Franklin Ruetz:

Anything that happened, I would try to diffuse with humor.

I think if I had shown other people more of how my mind worked or where I was coming from that

they might not have felt like I was the target they needed to pick on.

00:19:27:20

Martin Montague:

See, the bad memories are the ones that one always remembers. Because those are the ones that stick in your mind.

00:19:40:16

Kevin Cooper:

I think like a lot of us, Peter, I had a difficult adolescence. I didn't know who I was. My family was going through a lot of stuff that I didn't really know how to handle.

The way I coped, my defense mechanism, was to develop this happy-go-lucky persona. I'd put on this 'this is Kevin!' thing, like I had the world by the balls, when the opposite was true.

That's what my parents required, particularly my mother, she required me to behave in a certain way or there was hell to pay.

00:20:20:00

Bill Taradash:

I wasn't terribly close with my parents. My parents were nice enough people, but my mother was a snob and she was proud of it. She would just look down her nose at anybody who wasn't on an equal footing financially as her.

00:20:42:14

John Saliba:

My father was a member of Wilshire Country Club.

He said, this guy came in and he said, can I use the club to jog in the morning? You guys open at 7am, I go from 5:30-7 and I'm training for a world heavyweight fight. So my dad said, and we voted. 300 members. What was the vote? I mean, he's the most famous guy in the world at the time. It was 300 to 0 to not allow him to come and run by himself on the private club about a mile from where he was living.

00:21:36:10

Peter Jones:

When it was happening, did you know that life was a little different for us?

Chip Hayes:

My mom and dad made a point of telling me how lucky I was. They wanted to make sure that I wasn't going to turn out like some of the kids they knew from friends, that some of their friends had that were rather messed up.

00:21:55:06

Trey Scott:

I wasn't aware of the wealth of most all of us. That changed as soon as I had a chance to travel with my parents. That's when I got exposed to real poverty, in Haiti in particular. Everything changed in terms of my awareness of my wealth and privilege.

00:22:22:03

Pat McCabe:

When we were in high school, I played basketball at the Beverly Hills YMCA, and we would go to 28th Street YMCA in South LA, and get our heads handed to us...It was always in the back of my mind that this was not a level playing field. Even the contrast at Harvard School, given how white it was, and privileged. It was just very apparent to me, even at that age, that that was not right.

00:22:51:18

John Manulis:

When I was growing up, I did lots of things that were illegal. I used to have fun stealing ski clothes at ski resorts. I was a white kid in an upper class neighborhood with connected parents. And I got treated as if that's the rites of passage and that's how you learn your way. And we're going to trust that you're going to come out at the other end fine.

00:23:17:03

Group Zoom:

Martin Montague:

All of us were privileged kids.

Mike Burnap:

Yes we were.

Danny Sarnoff:

And are still privileged adults, no?

(Various: Yes, uh-huh, etc)

Martin Montague:

Yeah, I can see your house back there.

00:23:31:00

Danny Sarnoff:

My parents had left for China for two weeks for a vacation. So I said, "Dad, can I have a party when you're gone?" And he said, "I don't want anybody in the house." I said, "Well, what if everybody's outside?" "I just don't want anybody in the house." And I said, "All right, fine."

00:23:45:04

Danny Sarnoff:

My cousin was going to USC at the time, and he happened to be the Trojan, the guy that would ride the horse during the football games.

So he got the Trojan football team to agree to come to the house and be in the house with six kegs of beer on the condition that they wouldn't let anybody in the house.

Trey Scott:

We all knew there was going to be this big party at Danny's and that he was going to get the film.

00:24:06:10

Dan Sarnoff:

So, Chip brought a projector and a 16-millimeter print of Deep Throat.

Title Card from film:

DEEP THROAT

00:24:17:18

John Manulis:

Those were the days where there was no internet. There were Pussycat theaters in seedy parts of town.

Danny Sarnoff:

Between the two fireplaces we put two bedsheets to make a big screen on top of the house. We had called the friend whose dad ran Budweiser and he brought the entire Budweiser truck to the front of the house.

00:24:37:13

John Manulis:

The garden went down a couple levels and the screening was at the lowest level. And there was people everywhere.

Trey Scott:

I was juggling girlfriends at the time and they were both there at the party. It was a big night, there was a lot going on. God, if those parents knew...

00:24:53:17

Danny Sarnoff:

We didn't realize the way our house was positioned, you could actually see that movie from Sunset Boulevard as you were driving.

So, six o'clock comes, we've got 40 or 50 people there. By nine o'clock, there were 5,000 people at the house.

00:25:05:13

Peter Jones:

There were 4,800 people there?

Trey Scott:

That's hard to believe...

Danny Sarnoff:

2500, that we counted.

David Rosemont:

It was wall-to-wall, it was like nothing I'd ever seen before, like this limitless amount of people.

00:25:16:03

Danny Sarnoff:

And the police were suing us for charging minors for alcohol and offering pornography for a fee.

But the party was a gas... That was probably the quintessential party of the 70s in America.

John Manulis:

It's a great piece of mythology.

00:25:45:19

John Manulis:

I think all of us felt at that point in time that I will never be any closer to anybody than this group of guys. Because, essentially, half of our life at that point, from 12 to 18 or whatever, had been spent with them.

00:26:01:01

Kevin Cooper:

It buoyed my self-esteem to be one of the top kids. And I've got my summa cum laude thing, you know, that they gave me when I graduated for being one of the top guys in the [class], and I remember thinking, I worked hard for that.

00:26:22:06

Peter Jones:

So after graduation, what emotion did you experience most?

Chris Hormel:

Profound feeling of despair. Everything I learned, and all my friends, and, and this was over. And,

uh, I was really just empty, you know, like, what, what now you know? Am I going to make it?
(laughs)

00:27:00:24

Joe Healy:

I go to USC, the very first class, there's two girls in a skirt on either side of me in class. I freakin' freaked out. I kept staring at their legs. They would cross 'em, uncross 'em, recross 'em, and I'm just, I'm staring at their legs. I'm looking at them. Smelling perfume in class for the first time! The first month at SC, I was such a fish outta water, trying to adapt to women. After the first month of class, I didn't have one page of written notes. I was too busy just staring at people.

00:27:40:04

Chris Lewis:

College was ridiculously easy compared to Harvard.

Scott Shepherd:

I learned more at Harvard than I ever did at Stanford.

Mario Alvarez:

I got to the student store to buy the book for Math 101. That same book we used in the seventh grade.

00:27:59:16

David Theis:

The arrogance that I experienced at Princeton was intolerable. The chumminess, the hobnobbusiness, the tweedy life. Princeton was crème de la crème that was rich, thick, and white.

00:28:24:02

Joe Healy:

All the pressure came from dad. He told me, when you graduate you're off the payroll. Don't come looking for me.

Joe Healy:

There was never a thought in my mind about taking a summer off or screwing around for a month.

00:28:39:09

Paul Kanin:

We had to measure ourselves against our dads. My dad and your dad were bigger than life.

John Manulis:

Your dad was kind of scary.

00:28:49:22

Peter Jones:

Scared me sometimes too. He sold airplanes to the Pentagon and to defense departments all over the world.

Peter Jones:

Powerful fathers. Did you ever feel like you were competing with your dad or trying to get his approval? Very,very, rhetorical question. I mean, now I hear myself asking it.

00:29:13:16

Scott Shepherd:

(laughing) Yeah. Let's see. He died seven years ago. I'm still trying to get it.

Pat McCabe:

The expectation, "Well, you went to Harvard School and you went here and your family is successful. What's the matter with you?" I think that's crushed a lot of guys.

00:29:36:06

Kevin Cooper:

I was working at a summer job and my brother called me. He said, you have to come home right away. Dad killed himself. I was stunned, just completely stunned. I walked into my boss's office. I remember this, I'm a, I don't know, 18 year old kid, just a young man, walked into my boss's office, said, my dad killed himself, I got to go. And just walked out of the office.

Drove home, I remember driving home. I couldn't stop my legs from shaking. I was trying to drive, I'd push the accelerator, push the brake and my legs were going like this. I got home and found

out that my dad had shot himself the night before. That was sort of the beginning of the end of my family.

00:30:43:06

Cameron Farrer:

I'm the second of four boys, we were raised very competitively. We fought, we threw punches. Our parents loved seeing us be off-balance. They had an affluent lifestyle. For them, it was all about image, but my mom had higher aspirations, and it was a difficult reach. Through her, I saw what money can't buy, because she was profoundly sad, and that's where the alcohol came in.

00:31:30:06

Zooms: Click your audio on, we can't hear ya.

You're on mute. Hey, Chipper.

Hello all, now I got it! Bon soir, bon soir. Thought that was me. Oh! Haha. Outside the porch.

Shoves it behind the piano, etc

00:31:52:17

John Saliba:

How about us do a 50th reunion thing?

Wayne Woodman:

I don't know, if you ever have a fond memory of something from childhood, and you go, gee, I wanna relive that experience, then you do. And it's like, fuck. Shouldn't have done that.

00:32:06:07

John Saliba:

It'll be the time of our lives, and hopefully we're all still alive.

00:32:16:19

John Saliba:

The time we had together, it was a peak for me. I think I peaked at 18 to 21 or something.

I just pursued women my whole life. I waited till I was 40 years old, uh, to get married. And Peter, I really wanted to have kids, so I just said, let's get married. And we were together for, uh, 25 years,

you know, so that was pretty good. But, uh, uh, not devoted to her, and she knew it.

00:32:47:18

Peter Jones:

You weren't faithful to your first wife.

John Saliba:

I wasn't faithful to anybody, Peter. I've never been faithful in my entire life to any girlfriends or anybody. I think this is part of my shallowness that my daughter's trying to bring up in the therapy we're doing now. My oldest daughter was basically saying that I was self-absorbed and wasn't a very good father because I just thought of myself. And now I'm listening to her and trying to acknowledge it. It's not easy, Peter. It's not easy. You know.

00:33:22:15

Peter Jones:

The first marriage, how old were you?

00:33:25:16

Joe Healy:

Uh, 26. She was 23. We were living in Laguna Beach. How many people live in Laguna Beach their first house after being married, right? It was beautiful. She said, I'd like a, a, a new car. And I said, what do you mean a new car? You got a company car. They pay for all your gas. Why do you need a car? She goes, I want something more up my, what I perceive I'm worthy of for the weekend driving. And I said, excuse me? She goes, Joe, I grew up with nice things and I expect nice things. And I said, you know what? I think you might have married the wrong guy. But we ended up having 3 kids. Having kids, there's- it's just so special, right? It's a pretty amazing feeling.

00:34:19:13

Mike Burnap:

I was not a very good husband. I wasn't abusive, but I was inattentive. And when my son was about a year and a half old, she said, you know, I'm done with this. I think, I think it's time for this marriage to be over. And I was being oblivious, which I frequently spend my time doing. And so we spent about three and a half years getting increasingly bitter until finally it just came out that we would get divorced and I would take custody of the kids.

00:34:49:06

Peter Jones:

That's rare to give the father custody. They make movies about that.

Mike Burnap:

Yeah, well, that's okay. I mean, I loved it. I was a single parent for seven years. It's hard work. And sometimes when, you know, I need you to work on Saturdays, I've got no fucking daycare. What am I going to do? But I loved it.

00:35:16:11

Trey Scott:

Oh my God. Are you kidding me? Look at Santa Monica Beach. I slept on that beach numerous times.

Peter Jones:

You're talking about in our high school years?

Trey Scott:

Yeah, high school years. Oh yeah, absolutely.

Peter Jones:

What were you getting away from?

00:35:34:14

Trey Scott:

I had a problem at home. You know, my parents were, you know, kind of argumentative, and, you know, it was just kind of a place of stress. That ocean and that beach and those mountains-- I mean, I give them as much credit for parenting me as my parents for certain.

00:36:05:10

Peter Jones:

How old were you when you got your pilot certificate?

Martin Montague:

(long pause) twenty seven I think.

I've flown all kinds of aircraft. Been in all kinds of aircraft. I mean, I've been in the second largest airplane in the world.

00:36:22:12

AIRSPACE AMERICA, SAN DIEGO AIRSHOW:

ANNOUNCER: Sitting up front, Martin Montague, an American! Taking a ride with the Russian in the 124.

00:36:33:01

Martin Montague:

Flying gave me a purpose. It gave me a set of goals. I wanted to get to the airlines, knowing I couldn't get there. Because— (taps his arm) you know what that means, right? There were no Blacks and no females up there in those cockpits. It was an all white man's game. It's much better now, but I'm too old because as you progress in age, your chances of getting hired starts to plummet. (gestures down).

I'm one of the very few people in the world that can leave the ground by himself. And I can soar with the hawks. They make a left, you make a left. I'm just another bird. I'm just noisy. Yes, and I'm five feet from their wingtip.

00:37:24:02

Kevin Cooper:

When my dad killed himself, it was the day before he was going to lose his job.

I went to business school and I studied Real Estate and I went into commercial brokerage and I went into commercial development. And this is what my father's business was. I was this very

sensitive introvert. And I went into this business that really is for ruthless extroverts.

I started having flashbacks of abuse and shit that had happened to me and it was like, I'm not putting my kids through that.

The main thing that was happening is I was getting really angry and I didn't, I didn't know why. And my wife said, this isn't okay. She's not putting up with it at all. You need to go get some help.

00:38:05:16

The process was so amazing to me. My therapist said, 'I think you were trying to take the shame out of the family by doing what your dad did when he killed himself'.

My becoming a therapist was really about my healing myself. That's, that's what I realized ultimately, that's what it was about. We can deal with it or not deal with it, but it doesn't go away.

00:38:41:08

Cameron Farrer:

You know, my mom, of course, had just a horrendous drinking problem.

I tried to get them help along the way. Not many people were seeking help for alcoholism. It was just not a socially acceptable thing.

They'd taken her license away and she continued to drive, and my father allowed her to do so. We're all grateful that she didn't kill anybody, or herself for that matter, but-

00:39:14:21

Peter Jones:

Well, she kind of did...

Cameron Farrer:

Yeah, she did, and she took him with it.

It was not an unexpected event. My mom had been smoking in bed, which she did, I think pretty regularly. The house went up in flames.

I made a profound effort to have a family that's not the family that I grew up in. I was able to learn from what I saw and know what I did not want to do, and the life that I did not want to lead. For us,

family's sort of everything and I consider myself really fortunate.

00:40:05:17

Christopher Hormel:

My mother survived some real horrible things as a teenage girl. Hiding from the Gestapo, running messages for the underground. So she went through a lot. And then married my father.

His life was also a life of privilege and being raised in this important family. And I think that she always felt a little bit like the kind of less important person.

I saw my father hit my mom when I was a young child and I'll never forget that. It was, it was terrifying.

He was definitely a playboy. So that was like a role model for me. Men were getting away with the clueless, you know, sort of attitude that, you know, the world is for them.

I learned to have the attitude that women were for my pleasure. I have had to really face my dark side and recognize, you know, who do I want to be? And I'm still working on it.

00:41:27:19

Peter Jones:

When your dad died, now was that a liberating thing for you?

Chris Hormel:

Yeah. He would hurt me on a regular basis. And he can't hurt me anymore.

00:41:48:23

Peter Jones:

Hi, Johnny. It's been a while. And I thought I would say hello. As the sun is setting here in California, thinking about you and sending lots of love. And hope we can talk soon.

00:42:06:01

John Saliba:

I was doing some research on 50 year reunions on online, and I came across something that I thought was very interesting—

Trey Scott:

Wait, say that again? You were doing *research* on 50 year—? You are amazing!

John Saliba:

Well, excuse me Trey. Our goal is 100% attendance at our 50th reunion. And if we gotta send them a plane, we'll send them a plane or whatever we're going to have to do by that time.

You know, this 50th reunion is a huge deal. Let's say we can't get 100%, we get 98 or 95.

Unacceptable.

All of us on this call have positive memories. But not everybody has positive memories, you know, and we have to understand that.

00:42:51:15

Bill Taradash:

I had a small group of friends, and one day, just out of the blue, they decided I was no longer part of the group and they kicked me out of the group. And they were just kind of nasty to me.

00:43:04:00

When I think about my experience there and my experience here, which is completely different.

You guys are great. But back in the day I was teased constantly and that sort of sticks with you. I mean, I wasn't, you know, all gung-ho to come into this reunion. John Saliba got me in.

Dan Sarnoff:

How'd he do that?

John Saliba:

I just bullied the shit out of him.

Dan Sarnoff:

That's what I thought.

00:43:30:04

Jonathan Greenberg:

Brad Leonard was just a cocky, narcissistic, and macho poser.

David Theis:

It just felt like he was so cool, so hip to understand things that I didn't understand. His wit was just

like lightning fast.

00:43:46:16

Peter McCook:

He was always speaking his inner monologue, you know, he was always talking, and he was this smart guy, and he was always, he was always doing his air guitar all around.

Harry M. Moses:

Oh, Dr. Brad. I mean, my God. I remember when Brad was the trainer for the football team and would be wrapping somebody's ankle and telling me that he was going to go be a doctor. And I said, "Well, you've got a good touch. You probably will be great at it."

00:44:09:15

John Manulis:

I always felt that Brad's was a bit of an act. He had the brains, he had the cleverness, he had the thoughts. He, he had it all there, but he was, he was pushing it.

00:44:22:06

Dan Sarnoff (on Zoom call):

Every one of my companies is always looking for a better idea or a better product...

Scott Shepherd:

Wait, look at this. Brad Leonard's here! Brad!

Everyone:

Brad, how good to see you! Hi! My gosh.

Brad:

Hello boys, I'm back!

Scott Shepherd:

50 years later, he's here.

Brad Leonard:

It's good to be seen, man. It is good to be seen.

Jonathan Greenberg:

Brad, I haven't seen you in 47 years or something. How are you?

Brad Leonard:

I'm doing great.

00:44:51:23

Pat McCabe:

I was really, really close with Brad Leonard. I don't know what to say about him other than I kind of saw it coming. The pressure at home, 'You're going to Princeton, you're gonna be pre-med'. They were telling him all this. Brad was kind of a, a time bomb.

00:45:10:01

Peter Jones (group Zoom):

So Brad, give me one humbling experience that you've had.

Brad Leonard:

Oh, I'm a recovered alcoholic.

00:45:19:14

Brad Leonard:

I went from being an assistant professor of cardiology at Harvard Medical School to drinking gin out of a 7-11 cup and, uh, shooting up, uh, meth in a few short years. No family. No job. Uh, you know, hell, I slept in my car for a while, and I'm one of the lucky ones, man. I recovered.

I had no idea how to connect with other human beings. I didn't. It was all facade. It was all fake. I was fucking miserable and I didn't know why. So I had a lot to learn. I kind of, I kind of grew up at the age of 41.

00:45:57:10

Danny Sarnoff:

For any of us who have gone through, or are going through, that with our kids— I mean, I'm one of them who had to go through it with one of my kids. And it turns out they have to be the ones themselves to want to be helped, not be forced to be helped.

00:46:10:14

Brad Leonard:

Yeah. The cardinal thing is, I don't have a problem. I can stop when I want to. My problem is you guys on my back. That's my problem.

Danny Sarnoff:

Yeah. Right? It's always somebody else's problem.

Brad Leonard:

Oh dude. It's never my fault.

00:46:23:09

Dan Sarnoff:

Um, I would always tell my kids, there's two kinds of people in the world. Really, just two. There's the kind that trips over the cord and says, who the fuck put that cord there? And then there's another kind that trips over the cord and says, how did I not see that fucking cord? You have to decide which one you wanna be.

Brad Leonard:

One of my favorite lines, the guy said, he goes, I looked down and I was like, God dammit, who peed in my pants?

Everyone:

(laughs)

00:46:48:21

John Saliba:

Mr. Leonard, everybody that you see on this screen is going to be at Harvard High School on May 18th, 2024. Do we have your commitment that you'll come?

Brad Leonard:

100%.

Scott Shepherd:

Great!

John Saliba:

You're in?

Brad Leonard:

Fuck yeah!

John Saliba:

Oh yeah, baby! Alright!

OS Text:

First Reunion Planning Meeting

Los Angeles

00:47:24:03

Peter Jones:

Who are these old people?

John Manulis:

Hey Peter.

Chris Lewis:

Oh my God.

Bruce Blakely:

Peter, good to see you.

Various (as Dodgers win):

Oh, come on...! Yes! Yeah!

00:47:53:03

John Saliba:

All right. So. I have a handout. I mean, we're not messing around. Pass it down.

May 18th, 2024. The school sponsors dinner from about six to eight thirty or nine. What we really gotta concentrate on is getting guys to commit. We need housing, and I want to be able to make it as easy as possible for whoever comes. So, reunion attendance goal, 100%. Next page.

00:48:24:13

John Saliba:

If we're down to 5 to 10 guys, I'm going to go personally and knock on their door. And if still they say no, then I'm going to ask them to write a reason why they couldn't come or why they decided and I'm going to read it at the reunion. And financial is not going to do it because we're going to find financial assistance for the ones who use that excuse. So, and that's a huge one right? Or, I hated everybody. Okay. Who do you hate? Gimme the names because I'm gonna read it at the reunion. You know, just give me something. Just give me something.

00:49:12:19

Joe Healy:

My mom passed away in December. I got divorced in October of that year. My dad said before Christmas, says, Joe, I'm lonely. He said, why don't you come live with me and we'll just keep each other company for a while? So at 42 years old, I moved in with my dad. And we had the frickin' time of our lives, Peter.

Joe Healy (VO, video of Otis):

What do you think of that Dad?

00:49:38:12

Otis Healy:

Are you making this a movie, or a video? Very good.

Joe Healy:

We'd double date, and it was frickin' hilarious, watching him date, worrying about, you know, making love to a woman. I had to get him a Viagra because he was so nervous, and I dressed it all up on a pillow with tissue, so he said, 'You need to find somewhere else to go this weekend.' He ended up kicking me out because he got engaged. He got married, and then I got married after he got married. We had a great time together.

00:50:09:23

Joe Healy:

My wife says, "You know, the older you get, the more you are like your dad." Sometimes I smile at it and sometimes it scares the shit out of me. (laugh)

00:50:23:17

John Saliba:

What I have, it's very strange, Peter, is that it's in my throat and so I had a big lump here. And so the problem with the lymph nodes is that that's what carries through the rest of your body and that's when you get in trouble. If it does get worse and or if it gets like it's going to be bad, I'll, I'll tell everybody. But right now, you know, like cause yeah- now I'm going to get emotional.

Peter Jones:

It's okay. Me too.

John Saliba:

I'm sorry Peter. I didn't mean to.

Peter Jones:

It's okay. I'm here.

John Saliba:

I just want to make it to the reunion, you know? That's what I want. That's my goal. So I'm sure, I'm sure it'll be okay. Really. Thanks. So we could talk about something else.

00:51:14:04

John Saliba: (on Zoom call)

Hey, why don't we talk about something important? Like how to apply for Medicare or something at 65?

Classmates on Zoom:

I did that!

I'm an expert.

Hip replacements.

00:51:23:20

Dan Sarnoff:

I was at my niece's bat mitzvah, and then my daughters, they made me dance. And I pulled my fucking calf, hamstring, and I can't even walk on it now. You know, you think you're going to retire and go skiing? No, I don't think so. You know, I don't know what you can do when you're frickin' 65 and you can't even dance anymore without hurting yourself.

00:51:42:17

Peter Jones:

I take ibuprofen before yoga, and then like another one like later in the day, because it's like, it just feels like the Tin Man where I'm getting the oil in the joints, and it makes a total difference. I really feel a difference.

Wayne Woodman:

One of the values of getting older, is who the fuck cares?

00:52:02:11

Martin Montague:

I almost bought a saxophone two days ago. It's something I've always wanted to learn.

Wayne Woodman:

What are you supposed to do if you retire? Has anyone actually retired?

Dan Sarnoff:

I retired when I left high school. (guys laugh)

00:52:16:16

Bruce Blakely:

What I am fearful of is that when my mother got older, she only thought about the past. She never thought about the present or the future. And that is definitely not what I want to do.

00:52:31:08

Peter Jones:

Hi, Johnny. It's Peter. Just enjoying another beautiful Santa Monica sunset and thinking of you.

John Alison:

Hello Peter.

Peter Jones:

How are you?

John Alison:

I am alive. I feel generally pretty well.

Peter Jones:

How is your health?

John Alison:

I have been fit as a fiddle. The only thing that's a problem is uh, this, damn, uh, this damn-

00:53:08:09

Peter Jones:

Alzheimer's. That's the word.

John Alison:

Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's that's right. Alzheimer's.

Peter Jones:

How's the brain function, does it come and does it go or is it just something you're aware of or not aware of?

00:53:26:04

John Alison:

Unless something miraculous happens, uh, it's going to get more difficult. In the meantime, the best thing to do is just laugh, laugh, and laugh. Laughter is the best. It makes life quite bearable.

Peter Jones:

Let's, uh, say I love you today while we can. Okay. Well, I love you and we'll talk soon.

00:53:58:17

Peter Jones:

Enjoy the sunsets.

John Alison:

Thank you again. Very, very much.

Peter Jones:

Okay. Love you.

00:54:17:04

David Theis:

Looking back, I just feel like what a distorted environment to be in. There was no room to talk about feeling. No room to talk about vulnerability. Can't show anything, can't show any affection for men. People would call you queer, or whatever it was, they would call you something terrible. You had to kind of flex your maleness.

00:54:39:16

Jonathan Greenberg:

At Harvard School, had you sort of figured out what your sexual identity was or sexual preferences or not?

Peter Jones:

I did not know. It became something where I didn't understand- I had this attraction and I really thought it was a forbidden thing. I felt there was something, something wrong with me.

00:55:03:15

Johnthan Greenberg:

The culture made it so hard. I mean, it was such a macho, toxic masculinity type of culture.

00:55:16:15

Carvel Moore (Group Zoom):

When Dennis Lynn passed away, that was a real shock to me because I'd known Dennis since first grade, you know best friends. Dennis was the nicest guy I think I've ever met. And that was

another...y'know, we've lost friends since then, but that was one that was like, wow, we're getting older. Shit happens to you now.

00:55:36:18

John Manulis:

I always felt Dennis was like Dennis the Menace. I always felt like he was... you just couldn't tie him down and it was always a project and there was always a go-kart and there was always something being done in his garage there. And then, of course, when we got older, there was Boone's Apple farm wine or whatever, in the trunk of the car.

00:55:57:23

Peter McCook:

His trunk was just this portable party bar. And so after every game, I knew we'd go out into the parking lot and he'd pop the trunk and there'd be beer and there'd be, y'know, more stuff there.

John Manulis:

His energy was, no matter what, was a really high energy, a captivating energy, quite charismatic. You see Peter Pan in him.

00:56:25:00

Peter Jones:

We went to gay bars together. He was exploring. I think that there was something that always kind of tortured him.

Brad Leonard:

I think it was too. I mean, well, particularly if you remember his dad and his mom, there would be no talk of that in his family at all.

God, what a brutal battle that is to not be able to be who you are.

00:56:52:05

Peter Jones:

In 1980, we were 23, 24 years old. After a night of doing cocaine, Dennis talked about how he was the unwanted child in his family. He said, I think our dads really are missing out on getting to

know, two pretty nice, pretty, pretty great guys.

00:57:18:01

Kevin Cooper:

Addiction is this thing that I think still has shame in our culture. And it's a shame that it does because if somebody is addicted, then there's some pain that they're trying to cope with. I remember him as just a sweetheart. And I imagine a quite a sensitive soul. And, you know, those are the people that get hurt the most, right? The most sensitive.

00:57:44:01

Peter Jones:

He was a bartender all his life. He'd stayed exactly the way he was in 1973 and the rest of the world kind of changed. He stopped searching and growing, and I had to move on. I got help. He didn't get help, and he died of liver failure 12 years ago.

00:58:31:21

Scott Shepherd (as guys log on):

I remembered to record, so that's good. Hey Bill, how you doin'?

Bill Taradash:

Hey there.

Scott Shepherd:

Mr. Hayes, Mr. Saliba, Manulis.

John Manulis:

Hello hello.

Scott Shepherd:

The usual suspects are showing up. You're not drinking tonight, John? Oh, okay.

00:58:48:14

David Rosemont:

At this point in our lives, you get a little more reflective.

Scott Shepherd:

In October, I suddenly am older than my mother was when she passed away.

Joel Chithea:

I have a daughter who I am estranged from.

Chris Lewis:

I don't think my parents understood me. I didn't want that to happen to my kids.

00:59:07:07

Jonathan Greenberg:

My son struggles so much. Sometimes he's in a really good place and then an hour later he could be really down.

Pat McCabe:

The only good thing about Covid has been these zoom calls and getting to know everybody again.

David Rosemont:

Amidst all of the solitude these days, I don't feel alone.

00:59:24:08

Brad Leonard (Zoom):

We are dying to actually talk about what we think and feel with no fear of judgment.

Craig Hoffman:

I got a completely different impression of what this was all about, I thought this was all about the airing of grievances.

(guys laugh)

00:59:40:13

John Saliba:

If we've got 20 years, healthy years left, that's a that's a plus, right? The average 65 year old American lasts, uh, lives till about 74. Right. So we have about nine years left, right?

Michael Burnap:

No, no, no.

Bruce Blakely:

That's not true. That's not true. We've got a lot more to go, John. Yeah. And if you die early, I'm going to kill you.

01:00:09:18

John Saliba:

I got kind of bad news. I went back for another scan and it seems like this stuff is back in me again, Peter. And, you know, I didn't, Mona said, just stay quiet about it because the doctor's still optimistic. But I sure don't feel well. And I don't you know, I'm not, I'm, I don't know if you could tell, but I'm pretty skinny. I feel I've aged a huge amount in this last 12 months.

01:00:35:15

Peter Jones:

How do you deal with this kind of stuff? Loss, mortality?

Jonathan Greenberg:

Frankly, I don't think about it too much.

Peter Jones:

Okay.

01:00:48:08

Jonathan Greenberg:

It doesn't weigh on me because I'm pretty good at avoiding thinking about it.

My brother Danny, when he was a freshman at Princeton, started to have, you know, the first symptoms of of of psychotic thinking. When was approaching 40, he took his life. He did it in front of my parents' house.

Part of his illness was deep searching, spiritual searching. Completely rejecting the class background he came from and feeling more comfortable with people who were not, like, middle class and not working class, but the most down and out people. He had an unbelievable interest in and talent for relating to people in the street. With homeless people, and being a homeless person.

01:02:00:00

Jonathan Greenberg:

We created something called Daniel's Place, which is an outreach center for young people who have their first experiences of mental illness.

Jonathan Greenberg (speech):

People who deserve care, love, and support, and who receive it...

01:02:16:11

Peter Jones:

And then you created the institute in San Francisco addressing nonviolence and social justice, two of your favorite causes.

Jonathan Greenberg (Group Zoom):

So I feel like I have a mission, more than I've had maybe ever. I'm feeling compelled by urgency because there are so many problems that we have in the world and I'm trying to use the institute I direct as a way to address those issues through teaching and training people in non-violence.

01:02:46:09

John Manulis:

My most recent couple of endeavors have been purely about identifying organizations and leaders in the social justice/youth justice area that I think are doing something cool and valuable and saying how can I help?

01:03:03:24

SOUND UP:

Climate emergency...

Cameron Farrer:

We're living in a very unprecedented time, and a lot of people just don't have the bandwidth to deal with it. But I want to try to do something for the greater good.

01:03:31:18

Danny Sarnoff:

Privileged white boys from the early seventies? I mean, we are the people that they want to eat now.

SOUND UP:

Time's up! Time's up! Time's up!...

01:03:44:06

David Rosemont:

As a white male, you feel very, uh, exposed, more than ever before. To be really honest, you feel like, okay, now I'll be overlooked.

01:03:58:01

Chris Hormel:

When I first started in philanthropy, back in the 90s, it was basically, if you're a liberal white guy you could make decisions for everybody else. I've been that, you know, well-intended white guy all these years. And as good as some of the things that have come out of the American tradition of philanthropy, there is a part of it that perpetuates oppression.

01:04:23:24

Mike Burnap:

I've known a lot of Black people who've been very successful because they've been very, very good. Had they had to be better than I would've had to be? Probably.

01:04:35:02

Brad Leonard:

When people say, well, I don't understand systemic racism. Of course you don't understand systemic racism, you've never experienced it.

I can't possibly understand what that's like, but I can be open-minded and listen.

01:04:47:19

Christopher Hormel:

The last few years have opened my eyes so much further to how much more deeply the exploration needs to go into the impact of centuries of racism, and misogyny, and homophobia.

01:05:06:12

Pat McCabe:

I was just the prototypical midlife crisis guy, y'know, who had had a lot of success with not that much brain power. I did have a 23 year career in sports and TV. Then I tried to be an agent and I really didn't enjoy it. So I became an elementary school headmaster for twelve years.

There was one girl, and she had a terrible speech impediment, but there was something about her. There was something very, very brilliant about her writing in the third, fourth, fifth grade.

01:05:44:21

Amanda Gorman:

Poet Amanda Gorman reads 'The Hill We Climb'.mp4

A skinny black girl, descended from slaves and raised by a single mother, can dream of becoming president.

Peter Jones:

The inauguration, were you watching it?

01:05:59:06

Pat McCabe:

It was so dreamlike and amazing, what she was and what she became.

My biggest regret in life is not having been a teacher and a coach all along. I would just junk my 23 years in sports, if I could have.

OS TEXT:

Second Reunion Planning Meeting

Santa Monica Beach

01:06:23:19

John Saliba:

We have 55 'yes for sures' or 'yesses'. That's pretty good. What's important today is-

Pat McCabe:

Johnny, sorry. 55 out of how many?

John Saliba:

80, uh. We got about 90.

Bruce Blakely:

15 are gone.

John Saliba:

No, no. Not 15 Bruce. That's 11 guys. And I'm not feeling too good, so it might be 12. (laughs).

Pat McCabe:

(laughs) In your case, don't say anything. I don't wanna hear that.

John Saliba:

Let's stick with the 12. Okay. So. John Alison?

01:06:52:10

John Manulis:

Yeah, I would doubt he'll be coming.

John Saliba:

Why, why would you say that?

Peter Jones (OS):

He has Alzheimer's.

Pat McCabe:

That's premature if he's 66.

John Saliba:

Chris Hormel?

Peter Jones (OS):

Coming.

John Saliba:

Coming! Holy shit. Okay.

If we're seriously at 58 yesses now, and we can get-

01:07:09:18

John Manulis:

You're gonna lose 10% of that.

John Saliba:

What, for death? For dying?

(guys laugh)

John Manulis:

No, just for the way life works when people say they're coming to something.

Bruce Dickinson:

(laughing) From death!

John Saliba:

I'm very emotional guys, because-

01:07:25:02

Bruce Blakely:

It's okay, John.

Cameron Farrer (OS):

What's going on?

01:07:31:23

John Saliba:

I don't know what's happening, except for the fact that I love you guys. And, uh, when you said we grew up, we all grew up together, all of us. Y'know, it's unbelievable, the chance that we have to do something that is just gonna be special.

(Guys cook and eat a meal together, laugh)

01:08:24:12

Peter Jones:

How about that pesky Alzheimer's? How's that coming?

John Alison:

It's, it's very slowly sort of melting my mind away.

The best thing is to stay close with the people that, uh, give you great pleasure.

OS TEXT:

Falls Church, Virginia

01:09:09:17

John Alison:

In the mornings, it's the bird. They're all singing. And look at that.

Peter Jones:

Look at the light. See that.

01:09:21:11

John Alison:

I've had a couple of times where things just begin to go completely off the rails. There, there is a truly deeply expressed sense that something has been broken. So, what do you do? What you do

is you build our house and chop our wood and make our gardens grow.

John Alison:

We have so many nice, so many things. I mean, we find these and we conserve these so that they would continue to be alive.

01:10:28:00

Peter Jones:

I hear it in your voice, just a sense of I'm right here, right now and that's all I have. And that's all I have.

John Alison:

Exactly.

Peter Jones:

That's you.

01:10:41:00

John Alison:

Is that me? Yep. That's me. No, that, that was me. That was me for, for that moment in time.

John Alison:

My goodness, Ah yes. Now there, yeah. That's the May Day. Now that's something.

Peter Jones:

Can you believe how white those outfits are?

John Alison:

All the pomp and ceremony.

01:11:08:16

Peter Jones:

Remember when we took a helicopter to Disneyland?

John Alison:

My oh my.

John Alison:

I mean, we thought we, we could, we could not be broken. It didn't matter. We were going to always make it. It's so good to be able to have the surprise that comes from seeing people who you haven't seen for a long, long time, and finding a way to come back again.

01:12:04:21

Peter Jones:

So Martin, our reunion is in May. Do you think you'll come?

Martin Montague:

Probably not.

01:12:13:01

Captain (audio from "The Graduate" open):

Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to begin our descent into Los Angeles. Los Angeles weather is clear, temperature 72. We have enjoyed having you on board and look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

On Banner:

Together Then, Together Now

01:12:40:21

John Saliba:

Come here, man. Come here. Don't—no, no handshakes.

Craig Marx:

You look great. Look at these guys. Oh man.

John Saliba:

Love you, man.

Chip Hayes:

Chris Hormel! Oh my god! I haven't seen you in 50 years either!

01:12:51:08

John Manulis (Zoom):

People change physically, and some of them have gone through some pretty traumatic things and that leaves a mark. But for the most part, the characters, the senses of humor, the ways of expressing themselves, the rhythms, I recognized almost all of them.

Bruce Dickson:

Jonathan, yes! Greenberg! My gosh!

Bruce Blakely:

Hey Peter.

Peter Jones:

Bruce. Bruce, gimme some sugar!

01:13:12:09

John Manulis:

Oh man! So good to see you!

Chris Hormel:

Good to see you!

John Manulis:

It's like, Zoom does not do it.

Dan Sarnoff:

Is your dad still around?

Joe Healy:

Yeah. 97.

Danny Sarnoff:

Wow. My dad passed last year. We go to more funerals than weddings these days.

Trey Scott:

God. Whitney.

01:13:28:10

Jonathan Greenberg:

I wish I had a chance to spend more time with you when we were in high school.

John Saliba:

I was, I was a stupid kid.

01:13:34:03

Pat McCabe (Zoom):

I was not incredibly close to anybody really. There's a self-centeredness and a self involvement in high school.

But I think by and large, I can't think of anyone in our class who I wouldn't want to be close friends with, after all this time.

Chris Hormel:

This is intense!

Kevin Ryan:

(Laughs)

01:14:04:16

John Saliba (Zoom):

My dad passed away a couple of years ago, he was 106 years old. I said, "Dad, what's the last thing you can tell me? The very last thing in your life?" And he said, "Stay close to your friends."

Peter Jones:

Oh, Palm Royale? Yeah, I love her.

01:14:25:04

Dan Sarnoff:

He was the president at the time of NBC coming out to sneak out a cigarette.

John Saliba:

He was in our class. He's got a winery.

Youngsuk Kim:

Is that from his?

John Saliba:

Yeah yeah. Yeah. It's his stash. So uh, so we are, you know, fortunate sons over here, man.

Bruce Blakely:

Woo!

Bruce Royer:

Your hands are cold!

Franklin Ruetz:

I know. I'm full of metal since my back surgery. I run cold.

01:14:53:17

Harry Moses:

Ladies and gentlemen, could you move this way? Come on this way, please. Come out.

Harry Moses:

There were those who touched our lives, who would be our same age, and some, some of our friends didn't make it. These guys, who didn't stay as long as us, we're just honoring them and saying, well, we touch each other's lives and we're grateful. We'd like you to say something if you have something to say.

Harry Moses:

Dennis Lynn. Everybody remember Dennis Lynn?

01:15:25:10

Brad Leonard:

He was one of the funniest guys I've ever met. Quick and funny and brilliant. Um, and it's a tragedy that he's not here with us.

Harry Moses:

Clay Crouch.

01:15:36:18

Bruce Blakely:

Clay was one of my closest friends. I was over at his house all the time. His mother was a babe. Kinda had a crush on her.

DJ Hines:

I was lucky enough to be a roommate of Scott Dunbar. And he had it set up like you wouldn't believe. I mean.

Bruce Royer:

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think he was the first one to buy a Ford Bronco.

01:15:55:20

Whitney Ganz:

So Alfred, because he never rang the doorbell, my parents called him 'The Shadow'.

David Theis:

And we look over and there's Clay, (mimes raising hand) and we went oh my God...

Justin Dituri:

We'd go out to Joshua Tree.

01:16:09:22

Harry Moses:

Oh, my. Mushrooms!

Franklin Ruetz:

We were young, we didn't need drugs. We were naturally high.

Harry Moses:

Here's a toast, to Shawn Curtis.

Everyone:

To Shawn.

Harry Moses:

Here's to John.

Everyone:

John Kanin.

Harry Moses:

To Rick. Rick Welsh.

01:16:28:02

Chuck Nelson:

John was always a difficult guy to get to know. I mean, even when he was eleven years old.

Bruce Blakely

When he died, I was angry. I was angry and I didn't really know why, I didn't know how to deal with my emotions. He obviously needed help but he didn't reach out for help.

01:16:47:16

Joel Chithea

Don was the product of a broken family. His father was completely absent. The most poignant thing he ever said to me was, 'Joel, do you know how lucky you are to have a mother and father who love you.'

01:17:07:15

Harry Moses:

All of us here are so fortunate that we've been interconnected in some way or another for over 50 some-odd years, and it's an amazing triumph of love and compassion and understanding and vibration.

01:17:23:04

John Saliba:

I just wanna say, it was supposed to be a hundred percent. If you know somebody that didn't show up, shoot 'em. That's it. That's all I say. Okay, let's keep this thing going.

(Guys cheering)

01:17:47:24

Cameron Farrer:

Where's our tour guide?

Peter Jones:

These guys.

Girl:

So this is Munger Science Center. This is where all the physics and chem and...

Peter Jones (OS):

What year are you guys?

Girls (OS):

Uh, '25.

Peter Jones:

God, '25. I was '74, can you imagine? That was the 20th century.

01:18:08:00

Peter Jones:

My God, I used to run up this. Now I'm exhausted.

John Saliba:

Hi guys. Youngsters (laughs).

01:18:18:12

Peter Jones:

Do you remember smoking pot here?

John Saliba:

I never smoked dope on campus. I don't know, everybody, Sarnoff, everybody talks about it.

John Saliba:

Remember uh when we were in the prone position shooting guns up here?

Peter Jones:

I do.

01:18:33:21

Bruce Royer (Zoom):

Tighter bonds are formed in childhood than they seem to be in adulthood. I mean, I can look at all you guys and still see you at age 15.

01:18:43:24

Trey Scott (Zoom):

We have deep roots. And we're adding to our relationships into the future by showing up and being here right now.

01:18:53:03

Kevin Cooper (Zoom):

I do feel like I've got less runway in front of me than I do behind me. When I was at Harvard, none of that would ever have occurred to me. Just, life's going to go on forever, and I'm bulletproof, and I don't feel that way anymore.

01:19:10:11

John Manulis (OS):

If you're taller, get behind him a little bit.

Joel Chithea:

Okay you guys are tall.

01:19:14:21

Brad Leonard:

Privileged white men who were taught to never ever show weakness, never to let them see you cry. I think we're all dying to share some of the hurt and pain and experience we've had.

Bruce Blakely:

Forget about the handshake, man. (hugs)

01:19:31:06

Classmates (OS):

Kneel down guys!

We believe in you!

They can get down but they can't get up!

Partners get in here quickly.

01:19:40:09

Kevin Cooper (Zoom):

Being vulnerable, being authentic. Will that be safe? Will that be okay? Will that be received?

Kevin Cooper (OS):

When we are willing to be vulnerable and authentic and real with other men...
...there could be some magic that happens.

01:20:01:15

Photographer:

Okay don't move, stay there. Got it!

(All cheering)

Text:

The Class of '74 had the highest attendance for a fiftieth reunion in the school's history.

♪ *WHEN I THINK BACK ON ALL THE CRAP I LEARNED IN HIGH SCHOOL...*♪ Song:

Kodachrome by Paul Simon

John Saliba

John is in good health.

Reconciled with his daughter and remarried,
he and his wife opened a restaurant in Germany.

He has begun planning the
55th reunion.

Franklin Ruetz

Franklin, a proud computer nerd
since seventh grade, is a retired
IT Specialist.

Married nearly fifty years with two
grandchildren, he lives on a farm
in Washington.

Pat McCabe

Pat operates *Ready to Succeed*, a
non-profit helping former foster
youth navigate college and
young adulthood.

Each summer, a fellowship program
that bears his name provides paid
internship opportunities
at non-profits.

Martin Montague

Martin bought a farm in rural
Arizona, raising chickens with his
grade school sweetheart of
fifty years, Olga.

He is building an airplane
in his barn.

Christopher Hormel

Christopher's foundation makes
grants to address causes such as
climate change, women's rights,
and education.

His family has no involvement with

Hormel Foods Corporation, founded
by his great-grandfather.

Cameron Farrer

Now retired, Cameron travels the
globe in pursuit of the perfect
wave. He supports numerous
programs that focus on addiction
and mental health.

His wife Karen has served as the
mayor of Malibu, CA.

Trey Scott

A lifelong storyteller and
adventurer, Trey lives on the
Big Island of Hawaii.

He is building himself a
“dad shack” to be near his
daughter and granddaughter.

John Alison

Five years after his Alzheimer’s diagnosis,
John continues to enjoy life, tending

to his garden and spending time
with his family and beloved cat.

He and Peter stay in touch.

Joe Healy

Six weeks after the reunion, Joe was looking for a home in
Northern California, where he planned to retire with his wife Susan.

He was involved in a serious car accident.

He died surrounded by family.

Brad Leonard

Nine months after the reunion, Brad was driving outside of Dallas,
where he worked as a renowned cardiologist and mentor.

His car swerved off a highway bridge and plunged into the water.

He could not be saved.

We dedicate this film to them.

(left)

Joe Healy

November 13, 1956 - July 7, 2024

(right)

Brad Leonard

August 21, 1956 - February 1, 2025

♪...*Goodbye to you my trusted friend*...♪ Song: Seasons in the Sun by Terry Jacks

Written, produced, and directed by
Peter Jones

Produced by
Taylor Vracin-Harrell

Produced by
John Manulis

Edited by
David Jakubovic
Salia Hovanec

Credits to continue